

# SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress  
1st Session

Vote No. 572

November 13, 1995, 6:48 p.m.  
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## BALANCED BUDGET RECONCILIATION/Social Security Instructions

**SUBJECT:** Balanced Budget Reconciliation Act of 1995 . . . H.R. 2491. Graham motion to instruct Senate conferees.

### ACTION: MOTION AGREED TO, 97-0

**SYNOPSIS:** As passed, H.R. 2491, the Balanced Budget Reconciliation Act of 1995, will result in a balanced budget in seven years, as scored by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). The bill will also provide a \$245 billion middle-class tax cut, \$141.4 billion of which will be to provide a \$500 per child tax credit.

The House message to accompany H.R. 2491, the Balanced Budget Act of 1995, states that the House disagrees with the Senate substitute amendment to the bill and requests a conference with the Senate.

The Hatfield motion, as passed, instructs the Senate to insist on its amendment and agree to the House request for a conference.

**The Graham motion to instruct** would direct Senate conferees to comply with section 13301 of the Budget Enforcement Act (which takes Social Security off-budget) and "not to include the \$12 billion in Social Security cuts that were included as an offset for on-budget spending in the Finance Committee's amendment." (The Finance Committee's amendment did not make cuts in Social Security. The Social Security Administration announced the Consumer Price Index (CPI) number it would use for fiscal year 1996 after the original estimate of the bill's costs and before the offering of the Finance Committee amendment. The announced CPI figure revealed that Social Security and other mandatory spending will be lower than originally estimated, which meant that more could be spent in other areas without exceeding the spending caps or moving off the balanced-budget path. See vote No. 554).

NOTE: By unanimous consent, 4 motions to instruct conferees were in order after the Senate agreed to a conference and before it appointed conferees (see vote Nos. 571-573).

**Those favoring** the motion contended:

At the end of the debate on this bill in the Senate, our Republican colleagues suddenly "found" an extra \$13.5 billion to spend. Little mention was made of where they found that money. If we were in our colleagues' shoes, we would not want to dwell on the

(See other side)

YEAS (97)				NAYS (0)		NOT VOTING (2)	
Republican (51 or 100%)		Democrats (46 or 100%)		Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Helms	Akaka	Inouye			Gramm <sup>-2</sup>	
Ashcroft	Hutchison	Baucus	Johnston			Lugar <sup>-2</sup>	
Bennett	Inhofe	Biden	Kennedy				
Bond	Jeffords	Bingaman	Kerrey				
Brown	Kassebaum	Boxer	Kerry				
Burns	Kempthorne	Bradley	Kohl				
Campbell	Kyl	Breaux	Lautenberg				
Chafee	Lott	Bryan	Leahy				
Coats	Mack	Bumpers	Levin				
Cochran	McCain	Byrd	Lieberman				
Cohen	McConnell	Conrad	Mikulski				
Coverdell	Murkowski	Daschle	Moseley-Braun				
Craig	Nickles	Dodd	Moynihan				
D'Amato	Pressler	Dorgan	Murray				
DeWine	Roth	Exon	Nunn				
Dole	Santorum	Feingold	Pell				
Domenici	Shelby	Feinstein	Pryor				
Faircloth	Simpson	Ford	Reid				
Frist	Smith	Glenn	Robb				
Gorton	Snowe	Graham	Rockefeller				
Grams	Specter	Harkin	Sarbanes				
Grassley	Stevens	Heflin	Simon				
Gregg	Thomas	Hollings	Wellstone				
Hatch	Thompson						
Hatfield	Thurmond						
	Warner						

#### EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

#### SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

funding source either, because that source was Social Security. Our colleagues changed the estimate for the consumer price index (CPI) for fiscal year 1996 in order to reduce the amount of spending calculated for Social Security, which then permitted greater spending on non-Social Security programs. Not only was this change unethical--it was also illegal. By law, Congress is not allowed to cut Social Security spending in order to increase other spending. This change, though, was certainly consistent for Republicans, because the only reason they can claim that this bill is in balance is by using Social Security revenues in their calculations. Doing so is illegal, but again, our colleagues do not seem to be too concerned with what is legal and what is not. We, however, are very concerned about protecting Social Security from being raided to balance the budget. We therefore strongly support the Graham motion to instruct.

**While favoring the motion,** some Senators expressed the following reservations:

We do not mind telling conferees not to spend \$12 billion in Social Security funds on non-Social security programs, because nothing in either the Senate-passed or House-passed bill would do so. Our colleagues are aware of this fact--they know that the Finance Committee amendment had absolutely no effect on the Social Security program. Whether the amendment was passed or not, the amounts of revenues into and expenditures from the Social Security trust fund would remain the same. The spending in the Finance Committee was made possible because we found out a mistake had been made in guessing how much would be spent on Social Security in 1996. When we found out that we were not going to spend as much on Social Security, that meant that we could spend more money on other programs without unbalancing the budget. This issue does not even have anything to do with whether we consider all revenues and expenditures of the Government, including Social Security revenues and expenditures, in determining if the budget is balanced. We favor such "unified budget" accounting as the only honest means of calculating whether the budget is balanced, but the issue with the Finance Committee amendment is simply whether the Senate must stick with spending estimates that it knows without the slightest doubt are wrong.

Nevertheless, certain Senators have again taken this opportunity to bring up their tired arguments against unified budgets. Again, we point out to these Democratic Senators that we never heard them complain about using unified budgets when they passed President Clinton's budgets, or when they proposed their own budgets over the years, all of which have used unified budget accounting. Further, we note that many of the same Senators who are making speeches against unified budgeting on this motion also supported a Democratic alternative budget this year that not only used unified budget accounting, it also altered the CPI formula, which did not merely reflect the reality of what Social Security spending would be, it lowered it by \$141 billion. The glaring difference in rhetoric by our colleagues on that proposal and other Democratic proposals and their rhetoric on this motion is too obvious and extreme to escape comment. The appearance is that the principle does not matter a whit to them; all that matters is who makes the proposal. These comments aside, though, we do not object to the Pryor amendment, because the Republican plan to balance the budget will not raid Social Security to get the job done. Therefore, we urge the adoption of this motion.

**No arguments were expressed in opposition to the motion.**